

title: **The Boob Report #24**

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subject: **A few letters, not much else...**

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A quasi-szine is differentiated from a szine mostly in that it is free for the asking. If you want to continue to see this then just tell me, otherwise I may drop you on whim. My USOS publication *Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus* is available by subscription for \$.25/issue or I'm willing to negotiate all-for-all trades.

I now have seven people tentatively signed up for "Spy Diplomacy". I really would like to start the game in two weeks. It looks like a good lineup. We've got Bernie Oaklyn, Eric Ozog, Randy Ellis, Matt Fleming, Dick Martin, Paul Gardner, and Tom Hise. Bernie and Paul have paid the \$5 NMR insurance fee. The fee will pay for phone calls when moves are not received; the balance will be returned at the end of the game. I have preference lists from Matt and Eric here in front of me and I may have some from others of you lying around somewhere, but I won't use any preference lists unless I have them from all of you. The rules are enclosed again to the players. I'd like to play it "straight" this first time, though Dick proposed some interesting variations. Any questions, comments, etc. should get to me by the 26th. We will be on the same deadline schedule as THE FREE LUNCH GAME with 7 weeks to negotiate for Spring 1901 (that's two weeks for Summer and Winter deadlines and three weeks for Fall and Spring. The result in terms of time it takes to play is like five week deadlines with no separations). I have one person interested in the Gunboat game. Is anyone else interested? I'll keep the opening for a little while longer, I want press writers only though. I'll generate some press for this rag yet. No one was interested in a Bourse on the Spy Dip game. I'm crushed, truly crushed. The players in Spy Dip would be known to everyone and their press would be public. The Bourse players would be anonymous and they could write press too. Players in the Spy Dip game could use the Bourse to gather information and vice versa. I still think it would be great fun. If I don't hear stirrings before the game starts that will be that. Oh well, it will save me some work. My standby list consists of Brad Wilson and Kathy Byrne. More help is needed. Standbys for Spy Dip, when they are called, will receive a complete packet of the information provided to the player of that country since the beginning of the

game. Once a player has been called, he or she will, of course, only be eligible to take over that country (if the original player returns).

Record Review Section

I will be starting a new job in the fall and don't have much money to spend until then while I try to complete my dissertation before I start (I get a \$1000 bonus if I do), but I do have some comments on things I've been hearing on the radio. Maybe some of you have some reactions and meanwhile I'll be stockpiling a "buy list" for Sept. My last purchases before the self-imposed drought are down below in the Letter Column somewhere...

The Cocteau Twins newest perks up my ears enough to want to give them a try at last. "Echoes in a Shallow Bay" strikes me as more melodic, perhaps a bit more accessible, but still not what one would call commercial. It seems to me to be a good start if you've been waiting on the sidelines about the Twins as I have. Epic has produced something called "the Unsigned", an album of singles from groups yet unsigned by major labels. Sussman Lawrence from Minneapolis is on it (so I guess Scott was correct in not including them in his list last time) as well as the Reducers with "Let's Go" and a song from the Pressure Boys that sounds pretty good. I suspect the album would be worth it, if you like anthologies, as I do...some independent bands don't hold it together for a whole album.

Waylon Jennings sounds fantastic on his new record. He covers Los Lobos' "Will the Wolf Survive" and actually outdoes the Tex-Mex masters. I haven't heard Waylon sound this confident in ages...acres better than most of the pop-country crap on the radio these days.

Translator sounds better than ever on *Evening of the Harvest*, their latest. This is a band that's been around a long time, has been consistently ignored, but puts out some fine rock and roll. Again, seems to be a record to grab if you don't have their previous work, but have admired from afar. That's about it for things that have impressed me based on radio listening. Some of the things that have not impressed me are Peter Gabriel's latest...sorry, but "Sledgehammer" is anything but... and the Rolling Stones are nothing more than that, just rolling along...

Concert and Party Review Section

I'm also going cheap on the concert circuit this summer. We have a free concert series in the park that I plan to get to on a regular basis. I'm hoping to save up enough money to see the Cure and I already have tickets to see Tangerine Dream at the end of the month.

The first on the list of free concerts was Arlo Guthrie with Judy Collins. Judy Collins bores me to tears...actually she doesn't even generate that much emotion, but she was OK. For free, who am I to complain? She made a mistake by singing "City of New Orleans" and getting all sappy about Steve Goodman, seeing him the week before he died and that sort of stuff (he wrote the song...). It is, of course, one of Arlo's signature songs and he did it later, much better and without the extraneous chatter. Arlo is still great in concert. He is the all-time master at getting the crowd to sing-along, to laugh at themselves, and generally just let loose and have a good time. On to the letters.

Letter Column Section

Letters to this column are always welcome on almost any subject. The editor reserves the right to edit to keep the content to subjects he is interested in. My intent in focusing on music is to give light to the obscure, but you're welcome to try me on anything. First up is Brian Dolton:

Hi Jim,

First off, congratulations on your marriage - snuck that one in out of left field eh? Mind you, maybe it was mentioned elsewhere, but I'm sure it's the first I've heard of it and I've been getting *The Boob Report* for a while now. Anyway, best wishes to Charlotte and yourself.

((Had I really been keeping it a secret? That may have been subconsciously intentional, I guess I'm not heavy on personal chat... Let us say that Charlotte is not terribly enamoured of Dip or games in general, so she still considers this hobby something of a waste of time. She is also very jealous of all the mail I receive, or at least she pretends to be. I just keep telling her that she has to write letters in order to get any in return. In any case, I tend to try not to mention her too much because I get the idea that she would prefer it if I didn't. On the other hand, she seems to enjoy taking phoned in orders, even though I told her she didn't have to. She helps me keep my Dip-related files in order (mainly by not putting up with them when they are a mess) and has even become used to my silly giggling when I'm reading bad press releases. I do most of my letter writing in bed, while she's working on her various projects beside me. It really works out rather well, I suppose, and there is not much friction about it that I can see...he says with the confidence of the fool...sorry, I didn't answer your

question, did I? Anyway, thank you for the good wishes, we are very happy and hope to stay that way for a long time))

Right, what can I burble on about, musically, this time? I don't think I've heard any Trouble Funk, but I have heard some go-go and it hasn't moved me. Then again, I haven't heard it in the right environment, only on the radio. Not a great deal grabs me that way - recently, the most inspiring stuff on it has been Big Audio Dynamite (Mick Jones' (The Clash) new venture), and Pete Dinklage (the man behind Wah!) with "Sinful". Not much else that comes to mind.

Marillion - surprised to hear *Script for a Jester's Tear* is out of print. I would have thought it was the kind of thing that would sell steadily over a long period of time. Personally, I quite enjoy most of the Marillion I've heard, but it does remind me of Genesis a la *Supper's Ready* style. No bad thing necessarily, but I feel that it is very retrospective. Calling it "progressive" rock definitely seems a misnomer - perhaps Luedi's "Art-Rock" is a better term to use.

*((("Progressive Rock" has long ceased to be a term with any meaning. I would agree with SLUDGE in one respect, I don't see anything out there that pushes out the frontiers very much ("progressive" would have to at least imply that). I think Marillion is one of those bands that was screwed over royally by their record company (I forget if it's Columbia or RCA...one of the biggies anyway). Apparently, **Script...** was heavily promoted and record stores were deluged with copies of the album when it first came out. I, not listening to music on commercial radio much, missed them completely until Cathy Ozog raved about the album in **CR**. I went to my local record store (it had only been out for a few months) and the owner groaned when I asked him about it. He said that he had just returned a whole stack of copies to the distributor because he hadn't sold a single album. He did have one cassette left (apparently the "Art-Rock" crowd prefers cassettes) and he had sold a few of those, so he kept this one. I bought it and it remains unique in my collection as the only commercially recorded cassette I own. Anyway, that's all beside the point. The record company's blitz campaign killed the album because when they started receiving all those albums back, they reflexively threw it into the cut-out bin. I suspect there are plenty of copies in the world to be had, if one had the inclination to look))*

Paul's comments about "rock cities" caught my attention. Sfunny, but I'd always thought of the Ramones as being a West Coast Band, because that seemed to be the basis of their style - didn't know they were from NY. And the Velvet Underground, as well - I think of them as Californian, which is odd, because after all their early mentor Andy Warhol does seem pretty centred on New York. Ah well; just goes to show how little I know about the US. Comparing Paul's lists, though, threw up the big point, which is

that the NY music was mainly 'new wave', experimental, innovative stuff, while the Boston bands were straight AOR stuff. Does this reflect the differences between the two cities? OK, so I know little about either beyond what I get from the media (and let's be honest, most of what I know about the USA comes from Marvel/DC comics - but then it's an uncensored-by-the-British-media source, so is better than TV), but Boston comes over as preppy, middle-class, very respectable (and Irish... ((*you do realize that is a contradiction, don't you?... whoops, Father Pete missed that, I hope...*))) while New York is a livelier, punchier, polyglot place, with so much grit and heat and sleaze (no, not *the* Sleaze) that it is hardly surprising to find a far more varied musical scene there... any comments from you lot, who know more than I do?

First off, I take great exception to your Boston putdown, not the Irish comment but the Boston music scene comment. We (since I consider Providence part of the Boston sphere) have two of the best albums of the young year out of Boston bands: The Del Fuegos' Boston, Mass, hard-driving, guitar-based rock that slices deftly through the AOR haze and The Neighborhoods who deliver the high hard one... right between the eyes in the best tradition of raucous bar bands. Speaking of fun Boston bands, Everybody Does It by the Dogmatics picks up the infamous Johnny Angel as a producer and really hammers away at the old funny bone. Give it a spin if you like that sort of stuff. The airy glitter rock is represented by the likes of 'Til Tuesday, but that's about as AOR as the current Boston scene gets.))

Shriekback - what I've heard, I like ("Mercy Dash", "Putting My Hand On My Heart"). The only guy I know in the band is the ex-keyboard player of XTC, Barry Andrews I think. A bit of a nutter, but fast and imaginative - I'd like to see Shriekback live ((my local friend Paul has seen them, he's a huge fan, and thought they were great, I plan to catch them next time around)) (XTC were very good on stage - saw them at Newcastle University, 1979, Go 2 tour). ((Sorry for another intrusion, but does XTC ever tour anymore? They haven't hit the US since at least '79, since I've been watching for them rather intently)) Au Pairs? Haven't heard anything from them since *Playing with a Different Sex*, and that was three or four years back. Only song I remember was "Equal But Different", nice feminist number. No idea apart from that, hope someone else can help (assuming we're talking about the same Au Pairs - far from guaranteed...).

"Equal But Different" is the song I remember too. I suspect that was all they did. Too bad...))

Baseball? You talk about baseball? Damn, boy, I know nothing about the game. ((No wonder you don't understand us Americans...that's **our** game)) Now if you talked about American Football, I could join in.

But baseball? Not a hope. ((*The Cowboys and Bears are headed your way sometime soon, aren't they? How excited are you Brits about that?*))

Uh, does Bob Olsen like Joy Division, by any chance? "Wimpish boredom" is perhaps a growing movement, at least over here - Prefab Sprout, Blue Nile, Dream Academy, Floi Joy... Some of it I like, in the right mood, but I think it should be taken in small doses. Blue Nile didn't do much for me, certainly - they were critically acclaimed but didn't seem to percolate out to real record buyers. Lloyd Cole is a bit more passionate, though still a relaxed sound overall, and one I really like. Other UK bands to try; The Waterboys, very stirring, very tortured and grand, also The Woodentops, Smiths-influenced but punchier and less introspective. Some great driving rhythms, and apparently they are great live.

Heyo, time to be off, I think.

All the best, Keep the faith, Brian

((Thanks for another nice letter. Both the Waterboys and the Woodentops are getting rave US reviews, but I haven't caught either one on the radio yet. I always like to hear what's going on across the waves. Brian is folding his szine Lokasenna, to be replaced by a warehouse gameszine that includes a game of Rather Silly Diplomacy. Conrad von Metzke is starting one up here in the States and as of now I'm signing up. Put me down, Conrad. Conrad should take note that Brian subtitles his game: "Fuck Me Rigid, Why Did I Agree To Run This". I hope you know what you're getting yourself in for. Brian also plans a bimonthly szine of reviews, fiction, and politics. Lokasenna 26 has an editorial on the incestuous gladhanding that can go on between pubbers masking the faults of szines and massaging the egos of the editors. The British hobby is very different from ours, but I could say the same at times about us. To me, this is not a szine because it isn't good enough to be worth paying for; I'm really just "practicing". The problem quite understandably exists in all hobbies. Attempts at criticism tend to turn into nasty feuds because people get upset when someone criticizes something they do for fun and lose money on. However, it hurts the quality of szines because too often pubbers get lazy and sit back to soak up accolades based on past performance. I'd rather be told something stinks and use that as incentive to improve and find better ways of doing things. For instance, Bob Olsen complained about the previous format of this rag (set up for reduction lengthwise on the paper and then reduced, the print was very very small) so I invested some time in figuring out how to make it better and this is the result. I'm still not happy with it; however, and it's very difficult to get psyched up to work on it when people keep telling me how nice it is... In any case, a format change is coming, probably in September. I don't know if I have a conclusion to this ramble, so I think I'll just go on to the next letter...from Steve Langley:))

Dear Jim,

Since I have so little interest in who is whom in music (I listen to my local PBS radio station while

driving and enjoy what I hear without paying attention enough to know what it is). I hardly qualify for a voice in your chief interest. Your secondary topic, whether it is THE HOBBY or DIPDOM is not much more interesting to me, so what's a poor boy to do? ((you won't see none of that serious DIPDOM stuff in THIS szine...but I know what you mean...thanks for writing anyway)) For what it is worth, I seem to see PBM gamers calling their arena THE HOBBY even though they may not play Diplomacy.

How about a touch of Science Fiction. That's one of your interests, isn't it? ((Actually, no. It's hard to be in the PBM hobbies without running up against it though. I've even met Roger Zelazny and Harlan Ellison without ever reading any of their works, though I really enjoy Harlan's "meal-money" TV work. He is even crazier than the stories they tell about him. I met him when I was an undergraduate and a feminist friend of mine tried to get the movie version of his "A Boy and His Dog" banned on campus. He came to campus to defend the movie and argue against censorship while delighting in shocking everyone with tales of how many women he has slept with (he claims a number in the hundreds despite starting "late"). A fascinating man...but I still haven't read anything by him...I'm not sure why...)) Currently, I'm reading Greg Bear's "Eon". He is a 'hard science' writer in the Anderson/Niven sense (he's married to Poul's daughter, Astid, probably fortuitously) and he manages to develop a 'sense of wonder' premise that, tied with excellent characterization, make "Eon" one of the best works I've read in a while. I'm just past reading Paul O. Williams' "Pelbar Cycle" which were also very good.

It seems that there are more excellent works in Science Fiction than I have time to read. There once was the day when I could read every new SF title published. Now, there is so much that I can't even sample many new authors. We need (I need) some readers whose taste we trust to mention the author and titles of the truly good stuff. What do you think? One paragraph per letter as a critique of the current SF work being read (good or bad) would help out a lot.

Best, Steve

((That's exactly what I have in mind regarding music. If it will help me get more letters to print, I'd be more than happy to add some science fiction. I'm very sympathetic to your feelings. You may even get me out of my shell to read it. My wife Charlotte has C.S. Lewis' *Perelandra* in her collection (I wonder who named something after that one) that I've been meaning to read for some time...I know, that's fantasy, but my tastes tend to drift in that direction as opposed to 'hard science' SF. Charlotte's also been trying to get me read other things that are mostly rather old since she gets her SF books from the Salvation Army. On that note, it's only logical to sink into the SLUDGE next:))

Dear Boobity,

I'm currently coming out of my stupor ((damn...thought we were rid of you for good)) (the

more recent temporary stupor, not the life-long one) ((*whew...that's a relief*)) and am looking for new zinnies. Somebody told me that I should be getting *Yes, Virginia, there is a Ian Eckloff* since you do a fine job of demolishing people like Sacks and Hinton. ((...but I like Elmer...besides that szine has become pretty putrid lately)) I think you could probably find some people a bit more challenging to go up against, but what the heck. So, I'm enclosing \$1. I understand that your rates are something like 25 cents an issue, or for people like me, four issues for a dollar. I demand the latter rate. ((you're getting it...and the rates are right there on page one of this rag...))

So, are you going to give up this ill-considered boycott and come to Pudgecon this year or what? It's the July 4 weekend you know. I could tell you that you've been sorely missed...that dozens of people have told me they'll only come if you plan to be here...but why lie... ((I can't decide between Pudgecon and Madcon...you know how I hate tough decisions...I think I'll go to neither))

My record collection is so stale it's pathetic; I haven't bought anything in a couple of months. So I picked up the cassette version of the Cure singles compilation. It's OK, sort of so-so, a lot like everything else. Oh well. I won't hold you responsible, I guess... ((Gee, thanks for small favors..."Let's Go To Bed" and "Just One Kiss" are good songs, but you're right about the rest of it. One gets really tired of "The Lovecats", for instance, after about one and a half listenings...Smith is doing much better now that he's parroting New Order))

Is Watergate the great press game of modern times, or what? And 90% of the press is guest. ((OOOOOH, I'm soooooo jealous. I can never get anyone to write guest press for me and I've been trying off and on for two years now. Do you think it's my breath?)) Hey, do you want to trade my sub-zinny for your orphan zinny? You could write press... ((Love to...after your buck runs out, we'll trade))

Best wishes, Bob Olsen

((Thanks, SLUDGE. I'm not sure if that was printable or not, but what the heck. I printed it. Write again sometime. Next we have Dick Martin:))

Dear Jim,

Did I ever tell you I got to see the Reducers not too long ago? They were OK, but every song tended to sound the same. If not for this guy from New Haven who happened to be at the table next to us, we'd have been unable to tell one song from another. That's either good or bad, depending on your point of view. I thought Jonathan Richman, who we saw the following night, was much better--he connected with his audience and the Reducers really didn't. ((I only saw the last part of the Reducers set when I saw them (they were opening for the Replacements) so I missed feeling the "every song sounds the same blues". I don't ache for more than one Reducers album for instance, so I know what you mean. I think Richman is hugely

underrated and I'm glad you liked his show. I haven't seen him in a couple of years...maybe next time he passes thru.))

Hey, there's nothing wrong with playing what you think your audience wants to hear, as long as you can get your heart into it. The problem with Rush is that they don't have *any* heart at all. I listen to their songs (trying not to hear that awful voice singing those stupid lyrics) and realize those boys can play. But who cares, when it comes down to it? "Musicianship" doesn't matter to me so much as the impact of what's being played. Alex Lifeson can play rings around somebody like Springsteen any day technically, but I'd rather hear the guitar on "She's the One" than anything Rush has ever put out. You can always tell "head" bands from "heart" bands after a short listen, and I don't care about "head" bands.

Another problem with Rush is that they take no chances. One Rush album sounds much like another. I live for albums like *Nebraska* or *Remain In Light*—brilliant risks like these should be rewarded richly. You'll never see something like these from Pink Floyd or Rush. No, instead we get pompous junk like *The Wall* (*I've always liked that one anyway...but you're right*)

Loved your donkey excrement metaphor.

They've been playing a fair amount of Shriekback on the radio down here, and what I've heard has been good. Maybe I'll pick them up. Also on the radio are The Neighborhoods and Barrence Whitfield, both from Boston. Neighborhoods sound like a standard rocknroll band, and Barrence is a funky screamer. Yes, Boston is still alive as a city. Whatever happened to the band though? (*...and does anybody really care?*) The rumor surfaced again notlong ago that they'd have a third album out this summer (what, 12 years late?). Talk about stories that will never die...I expect to hear this one from my grandchildren (if we ever have kids!). (*My advice is to forget it and go find the Del Fuegos*)

Don't feel too bad about having your tastes called "poppy", hey, it happens to the best of us. "Pop" is often the "best" music, and it should be. After all, if you're going to hear a song hundreds of times over several months, it had *better* be good! I've heard it said too many times that "if it's popular, it can't be good." What is this, the stock market?

Well, I could go on, but shouldn't. Lots of work to do (albums to listen to, places to go, finals to take, etc...). Too late, I find out U of MD is hooked up to Arpanet or I'd have sent this to you on that just to see how it works. (*I'm still JFB at BROWNVM, I imagine you are done with finals and have no computer access at the moment...oh well. I'll bet others of you could do it, and don't even know it. For example, Pete Gaughan is at UTA and their node is UTARLVM1. If I knew whether or not Pete had an account and what it was I'd surprise him with a note right now...*)

Albums for the desert island this month: U2 - *Unforgettable Fire*, Elvis Costello - *Get Happy* (*that's a special favorite of mine too*), Dylan, Clash, Who as before.

Take care, Dick

((I think I'll shift gears with a little ditty from Fred Hyatt.))

Dear Jim,

Tell you what I'm gonna do! I'm gonna make you an offer you can't refuse! (I hope!) I'm willing to trade *The Home Office* (*Fred's new szine*) for your publications. I know *Home Office* is only one page at present, but it will grow. (*Sure, why not?*)

I was going to send you a list of my most recent musical acquisitions, but they include things like "Songs of the Auvergne", "The Lark Ascending", and the current version of "Father" (*(?, I had a little trouble with your handwriting, I hope I spelled things right...actually, I wouldn't mind tossing things around with you. My most recent acquisitions are John Eliot Gardner's version of Bach's Brandenburg Concertos (which I recommend very highly), the Dutoit Schererazade that I mentioned two issues back (very clean recording, lush performance, not "digitally harsh" like some recent recordings have been), Husker Du's Candy Apple Grey (I like this one more and more with each passing day..."Hardly Getting Over It" should be song of the year...), and Volume 5 of the Mozart Symphonies (the second-to-last set) from Christopher Hogwood's Academy of Ancient Music. Now, of course, I'm broke and my buying is curbed for a few months, but I always like to keep it balanced*) not to mention Sarah Vaughan's recording with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. They have nothing in common with most of the things mentioned in *The Boob Report #23*, so forget it. My taste in music is akin to von Metzke's.

Cheers, Fred Hyatt

PS-I do dote on the Beatles, go ape over bagpipes and have an interest in "primitive" music. Do you know the "Missa Luba"?

((I don't think so...I'd love to expand the music focus, I just don't want to end up spouting off into thin air. I, too, like bagpipes and primitive music. You and von Metzke know much more about vocal music than I do and no one is more eager to learn... We'll end this with one late arriving card from Mark Luedi:))

Dear Jim-Bob,

(sloppily written postcard) (*this is his editorial comment, not mine...I suspect he's attempting to apologize for the crazy-quilt grammar he's about to inflict on us*)

Okay, I keep Yes, Virginia getting, but Wo ("where" if keine Deutsch sprichst) (*I don't really speak German...I learned a great deal of grammar when intensively studying Nietzsche as an UG...now you know why I'm so schizo...*) is *The Boob Report* lately? Have I been dropped for a whim? (Furious Fit of Jealousy) Speak, oh enlightened one!

((TBR #23 was dated May 12th. It has been five weeks...I think you got spoiled by two issues per month

through most of the spring. Let me know if that one was lost in the mail or something...I'll send you another copy.))

Okay, time to say goodbye, take care, Mark

((That'll do it for this month's letter column. Remember that I'll be publishing a mid-monthly to get the Spy Dip game going, so keep those cards and letters coming. I'm enjoying this part of the job the most.))

Personal Note to You:

(RUSSIA to GM): Don't you dare leave out an i, r, g, or h. All of them have specific coded meaning. Lucky you have a repeat key on your computer. *((Sigh...yes, but I had to COUNT...))*

(OLSEN to BERNIE): Your toadies have proven to be a hardy and lon-lived race. Most of those I can think of are still around. Uncle Dan, yes, he's around, still taking that night course in charm school. Orczog of course. Rusnak, most certainly. Tallman, ultra-marginally, if that. *((did you see his latest rag, maybe he'll make a comeback...))* As recently as a year or so ago, I was still in a game with H.D. Bassett. *((I'm still in one with him, he's hanging on))* Lehto, he's gone. Kurucz and Melucci have been gone for years except that their names popped up on a recent "poll". Oh yeah, and you'll be glad to hear this--Boardman is still around too.

(OLSEN to BERNIE'S OTHER PRESS): My, you are out of it these days. When we talk verbosity nowadays, we talk Larry Peery. By the way, writing a 3000 page manual should be easy, since nobody's ever going to read it. Why not sneak the entire run of old *Le Front's* in long about page 2,639?

(RUSSIA to ENGLAND): Well, your plan worked. Now you will be able to build that extra fleet in Liverpool and take France by surprise. Well, to tell the truth, those of us who know you know that it is no surprise that you planned to stab France. However, knowing France's mentality, it would be a surprise to him, now, wouldn't it.

(RUSSIA to FRANCE): Now, let's see. It would be f tun-naf, f tus-lyo, f tyn-wmd, a mun-bur (o), a ber-kie (o), a sil U (A) and all for nothing since Brest, Paris, Portugal, and the like will all belong to the British by then, huh!

(PARIS-LONDON): Either I have just been called a "no-talent", or my translator just paid for a mistake with his life...

(MOSCOW): Now, let's see. If I was to penetrate the Ionian, just how would I go about it. I got it! Slide some more fleets down the pike. But, then, what about the stabbing Olsen? Will he bite his tongue, or is he all tongue. The real question is: is someone with all tongue, that is, someone with forked tongue, all forked tongue, all fork, or all tongue? Godd question, Bernie. It shows them out there that you are at least thinking, even if you are not doing much else.

(PARIS-VIENNA): Enjoy it while you can...

(RUSSIA to RUSSIA): Back against the wall, again, huh, Bernie. Gee, it sounds so familiar. And, all because Turkey could not bring herself to ally trustingly with you. Stab, Stab, Stab. Name of the game and all that rot.....

(BOB--BOOB): Finally found a local radio station that plays "new music"...from midnight to 5AM. So I taped some of it and it's all...annoying avant-garde dreck. Sigh...that isn't what I'm looking for either. The search continues... *((...if you're going to be that picky, I suggest you start learning how to play a synthesizer and start your own band...))*

(WARSAW): Challenge of the century. I dare you guys to make this game go in such a way that Russia wins the game. Frankly, I do not believe you have the talent to pull it off? *((SLUDGE seems to be trying...))* Your personal integrity suffers some, a bit, a little, too, also.

(FRENCH LAST WORD FROM LAST TIME): BM (?) attempts to gift Turkey with Naples in exchange for a snowball! Loki reaches for an icicle... *((my sniffing 'll snuff you in no time and that'll melt your icicle...))*

(FRENCH MUSINGS): By now, you may have noticed the slight error in the 1907 Supply Center Chart--Naples is mine. Rather than belabor a point... *((thanks for bringing it up, you were the first to notice it. Feel free to belabor next time))* Major League baseball as seen from the Pacific Northwest presents a rather dismal picture. The Mariners have been making other American League strikeout hunters happy, while the M's pitchers have been frustrating opposing hitters by issuing free passes rather than allowing them to hit the ball. The accession of Dick Williams has seen one major change: Danny Tartabull is now on the DL with an unidentifiable ailment, the major symptom of which seems to be an overall tiredness and apathy. And Ed Nunez is back--apparently no one got around to breaking his legs while he was on the DL. Stay tuned for further developments. That's it. Thanks. *((he won't make us wait very long...though Ed seems to be so far gone he's having hallucinations...join the winners, start rooting for the Giants against the Astros. It's gonna be a helluva fight))*

(MORE FRENCH MUSINGS): Major League baseball in the Northwest--ha! Go ahead, waste my time... Introducing Badur, my new bodyguard. Pronounced "badder", of course. A pleasant fellow... *((I've got this ugly red fire breathing dragon staring at me from the bottom of Ed's letter...ugh))* Enough. Thanks!